

Amendment to the Claims

1-29 (Cancelled)

30. (Currently amended) A nucleic acid molecule as claimed in claim 54 further comprising a heterologous ~~signal~~ reporter gene operably linked to the inducible promoter region.

31. (Withdrawn)

32. (Currently amended) A vector comprising the nucleic acid molecule of claim 30.

33. (Currently amended) A vector as claimed in claim 32 comprising at least one of the following: luxAB ~~signal~~ reporter genes; sacB gene; antibiotic resistance; RP4/RK2 mobilizing elements.

34. (Currently amended) A vector as claimed in claim 33 comprising lux AB ~~signal~~ reporter genes, sacB gene, kanamycin and thiostrepton resistance genes, an *E. coli* origin of replication, and RP4 mobilizing elements.

35. (Currently amended) A method of transforming a host cell comprising ~~use of a~~ introducing the vector ~~as claimed in of~~ claim 32 into a host cell.

36. (Cancelled)

37. (Previously amended) A method as claimed in claim 35 wherein the host cell is a mycolic acid bacterium of the same strain from which at least one of the inducible promoter and operon proteins were isolated.

38-48 (Cancelled)

49. (Withdrawn)

50. (Previously amended) An isolated nucleic acid molecule comprising a nucleotide sequence encoding an operon protein, which operon protein is the Regulator (REG) protein of the R. corallina ohp operon ~~or a modification thereof~~.
51. (Currently amended) A nucleic acid molecule as claimed in claim 50 wherein the nucleotide sequence (SEQ ID NO: 1) encodes ~~the~~ an amino acid sequence shown in Fig. 4 ~~(SEQ ID No. 1)~~ from ~~initiator codon~~ nucleotide base 295 to ~~terminator codon~~ nucleotide base 1035.
52. (Previously amended) A nucleic acid molecule as claimed in claim 51 wherein the nucleotide sequence is shown in Fig. 4 (SEQ ID NO: 1) from initiator codon 295 to codon 1035.
53. (Cancelled)
54. (Currently Amended) A nucleic acid molecule as claimed in claim 50 further comprising an inducible promoter region of the nucleotide sequence SEQ ID No: 1 encoding the *R. corallina ohp* operon ~~described~~ having the genes shown in Fig. 3 ~~(SEQ ID No. 1)~~ wherein the Regulator (REG) protein controls transcriptional initiation of said inducible promoter region.
55. (Currently Amended) A nucleic acid molecule as claimed in claim 54 wherein the inducible promoter region is the ohp promoter region which lies between genes orfR regulatory gene (~~terminator codon~~ nucleotide base 1035) and orfT transport (~~initiator codon~~ nucleotide base 1450) shown in

Fig. 4 (SEQ ID No: 1) ~~or is a modified inducible promoter region which is at least 90% identical to said *ohp* promoter region.~~

56. (Currently Amended) A vector comprising the nucleic acid molecule of claim 50.
57. (Currently Amended) A vector as claimed in claim 56 comprising one or more of the following: *luxAB* ~~signal~~ reporter genes; *sacB* gene; antibiotic resistance; RP4/RK2 mobilizing elements.
58. (Cancelled)
59. (Previously added) A host transformed with the vector of claim 56.
60. (Previously added) A host transformed with the vector of claim 32.
61. (Currently amended) A method of introducing an operon protein into a host cell, which operon protein is the regulator (REG) protein of the *R. corallina ohp* operon ~~or a modification thereof~~, said method comprising the step of transforming said host cell with a vector as claimed in claim 56.